Social Justice Attitudes of Undergraduate Nursing Students: The Impact of Praxis

Dec 2, 2022 – Beth Doyle, DNP

Social Justice In Nursing:

• **American Nurses Association** – Code of Ethics mandates anchoring nursing students in social justice by modeling in content, clinical, and field experiences. (2015)

• **American Association of Colleges of Nurses** – Social justice is an inherent value for Professional Nursing Practice that should be integrated throughout nursing curricula. (2021)

• **Institute of Medicine** – Teaching nursing students concepts of social justice helps achieve lasting change. (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2021)
Social Justice Attitudes Scale

- **Attitudes Towards Social Justice** – assesses “endorsements of social justice values, goals and behaviors” (Torres-Harding, 2012, p. 81)
- **Perceived Behavioral Control** – assesses self-efficacy and confidence towards social justice related goals
- **Subjective Norms** – assesses how others support or discourage social justice activities
- **Intentions to Engage** – assesses future intentions for participation in social justice activities. (Torres-Harding, 2012)

Convenience Sample – Undergraduate Nursing Students from 3 Different Programs
**Project Setting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Community College</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Social Visits Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Liberal Arts University</strong></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Social Visits Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University Medical Center</strong></td>
<td>100+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Social Visits, and Active Care Coordination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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"Educating for Social Change"

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**Hypotheses**

1) There will be significant positive changes in social justice attitudes in the majority of students after their clinical experiences.

2) Students whose programs include more time and involvement in client care coordination will have a greater change in their Social Justice Attitudes score than those focused only on social interaction.
Mixed Results

Hypothesis 1: Statistically Significant

Hypothesis 2: Not showing statistically significant differences

Pretest to Posttest Mean Score Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest Mean</th>
<th>Posttest Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>5.898</td>
<td>6.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&lt;0.0001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Medical Center</td>
<td>6.048</td>
<td>6.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&lt;0.0001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Liberal Arts Univ.</td>
<td>5.997</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P=0.034</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Community College</td>
<td>5.589</td>
<td>6.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&lt;0.012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Social Justice Attitudes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Subscale Means</th>
<th>Aggregate of All Participants</th>
<th>Pretest Mean</th>
<th>Posttest Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.501</td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
<td>P=0.003</td>
<td>6.660</td>
<td>6.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.231</td>
<td>Perceived Behavioral</td>
<td>P&lt;0.0001</td>
<td>5.064</td>
<td>5.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.064</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>P=0.012</td>
<td>5.510</td>
<td>6.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.907</td>
<td>Subjective Norms</td>
<td>P=0.005</td>
<td>5.510</td>
<td>6.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.284</td>
<td>Intentions to Engage</td>
<td>P=0.005</td>
<td>5.907</td>
<td>6.078</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education Implications**

- Placing nursing students in **direct interaction** with marginalized populations increases social justice awareness and self-efficacy.

- As students’ overall **attitudes** towards social justice improved, their **intention to act** on social justice issues did as well.

- Education based in **praxis** – exercising the art of nursing – seeing both the strengths of, and barriers impacting the people they care for, can make a significant impact on students’ **intentions to act** on social justice.
Limitations

• No qualitative data
• Data Gathered Pre-Covid
• Relatively small study -- n 51
• Impact from didactic coursework (different among the schools) was not captured
• Many factors impact the lives of students during a 5 to 10-week period. We cannot say all noted changes can be accounted for only by their experiences in the clinical setting.

References


